

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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1. Which Emissions Do I Report?

All emissions from facility operations must be reported regardless of whether emissions are from sources that require a permit or not. Emissions should include criteria pollutants, specific organics, and toxic air contaminants/ozone depleting compounds including certain chemicals defined as exempt compounds in Rule 102. *Facilities subject to reporting requirements under the AB2588 program should review the [Supplemental Instructions for AB2588](#) for further guidance and an extensive list of toxic substances.*

Criteria pollutants are reactive organic gases (ROG) or volatile organic compounds (VOC), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur oxides (SO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM).

Specific organics include hydro-fluoro-carbons (HFC) and hydro-chloro-fluoro-carbons (HCFC).

Toxic air contaminants/ozone depleting compounds (TAC/ODC) are identified in Table IV of Rule 301 including the following chemicals defined as exempt compounds in Rule 102:

Toxic air contaminants are carbon tetrachloride, methylene chloride, and perchloroethylene.

Ozone depleting compounds (ODC) include 1,1,1-trichloroethane (111-TCA) and chlorofluorocarbon (CFC).

Note that usages and emissions from the following categories are **NOT** subject to reporting requirements under the Annual Emission Reporting Program:

- Exempt compounds as defined in Rule 102 as **non-VOC**: acetone, ethane, parachlorobenzotrifluoride (PCBTf), volatile methylated siloxanes (VMS), methyl acetate.
- On-road motor vehicles (cars, trucks, vans, etc.)
- Off-road vehicles and mobile equipment (forklifts, bulldozers, tractors, lawnmowers, etc.)
- Portable equipment registered under the Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program.
- Clean Air Solvents.
- Architectural coatings/paints (only when used on structures attached to buildings or earth).

2. What Is the Difference Between Permitted and Non-Permitted Equipment?

All operating equipment which requires an AQMD permit, even if applications have not been submitted or written permits yet issued, is considered permitted equipment for Annual Emissions Reporting. Equipment or processes that are not required to have an AQMD permit are considered non-permitted equipment. A list of equipment or processes that are not required to have an AQMD permit can be found in AQMD [Rule 219](#). Equipment/emissions exempt pursuant to Rule 219 must have separate records to clearly demonstrate that the fuels or the materials were used exclusively in non-permitted equipment in order to report the emissions for the "non-permitted" sources. If records are not available to clearly document these non-permitted emissions, emissions must be reported as "permitted".

In addition, equipment/processes/operations which are directly related to permitted equipment or processes are considered permitted, even though they themselves may not

require a specific permit. For example, emissions from materials used in preparing surfaces before being sprayed in a permitted spray booth are considered permitted emissions and should also be reported on the "permitted" emission sources.

3. Why Do I Need to Provide Information for Both Permitted and Non-Permitted Equipment?

Emissions data from your equipment and processes, both permitted and non-permitted, are used to compile the emission inventory for this region. This information is required by state and federal air quality management programs. The emission inventory forms the basis for air quality planning and analysis which is an important component of our region's Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Therefore, under AQMD Rule 301(e), facilities are required to report all emissions from facility operations.

4. How Do I Report a Status Change for My Facility?

Contact Customer Service at (909)396-2900 or toll-free from inside California (866)888-8838 or Permit Services at (909)396-3385. To avoid possible surcharges and enforcement actions, these steps must be taken to make official changes to the facility's status.

5. How Do I Use the AER Reporting Tool?

The new AER reporting tool is a web program and can be accessed at www.aqmd.gov/aer/aer.html. User must log in with username and password. New user must complete one-time registration with valid email address. User can create unique username and password and must confirm the registration to become active user. Please see "Getting Start" session in Help and Support manual for detailed instructions.

6. The Buttons on My Screen Are Overlapping, or They Do Not Work When I Click on Them?

Make sure that the computer internet browser meets the requirement specified in "Internet Browser Requirements" session. For Internet Explorer user, make sure the "Compatibility View" option located in Tools is deselected.

7. Can I Use the Same User ID and Password that I Used to Submit Reports in Previous Years (2013 and earlier)?

No. The "New" AER Reporting Tool (for reporting years 2014 and after) and the previous system (used for reporting years 2013 and earlier) are resided on completely different platforms. Users must complete the one time registration process in order to access the "new" AER Reporting Tool.

8. I Completed the Registration, But Did not Receive a Confirmation Email?

Depending on SCAQMD website conditions, it may take a few moments for the automatically-generated registration confirmation message to be sent. If you have not received a confirmation email after submitting your account request, you may try the following:

- 1) Verify that the email address you provided is valid;
- 2) You may "refresh" your email Inbox to check for any new messages. If using Microsoft Outlook, go to the "Tools" menu and select "Send/Receive All" to check for new incoming messages;
- 3) Check your email client's "Spam" or "Junk Mail" folder and add the following email address to your email client's "Safe Senders" list: _____@aqmd.gov. For detailed instructions on how to do this, refer to your email client's "Help" page;

- 4) Retry the registration process by re-entering your User Profile and Company Information in a new Account Registration form, paying close attention to the correct spelling of your email address.

Shortly after submitting your registration request, you will receive an automatically-generated confirmation message from the SCAQMD. In order to complete the registration process, you must click on the link contained in the confirmation email message. **Note: You must complete the registration process (by clicking the link in the confirmation message) within 72 hours of receiving the confirmation email.** If you continue to have issues with the registration process, send a request for support to: aer@aqmd.gov

9. How Do I Access My Facility Information?

In the “new” AER Reporting Tool, accessing facility information is a two step process. First, user must log in to the tool with Username and Password at “AER Home” webpage. Next, on the “Access Facility” page, user can access facility’s information, including permit and emission profiles, using a combination of Facility ID number and PIN code.

The Facility ID number is a unique six (6) digit ID assigned by the SCAQMD for a specific facility. PIN is an eight (8) character code created by the SCAQMD for facility that is subject to annual reporting requirements. PIN codes remain valid until being re-issued and replaced.

10. I Do Not Know my facility PIN Code. What should I Do?

Personal Identification Number (PIN) codes are created by the SCAQMD and printed on the notifications sent to facilities via US Mail in December. If you did not receive a letter containing the facility PIN code, or you misplaced the notification letter, please contact AER support via email (aer@aqmd.gov) to request your facility PIN code. Please note that PIN can only be release to facility authorized person and to a third party (consultant) with facility’s consents.

11. How Do I View Previous AER Submittals?

The AER Reporting Tool is designated for reporting emissions data for the 2014 Calendar Year and following years. Some facilities have used the tool for 2013 AER will be able to view and limited to 2013 AER data. For other facilities, previous year AER data will be available after calendar year 2015.

User can still access to previously submitted AER data for 2013 Calendar Year and earlier via the “old” AER Web-Tool for amending of historical data.

12. My Facility Information Is Not Correct. What Should I Do?

Facility information, including facility name, address, status, and permit profile are uploaded from the SCAQMD Permit database. If the information is incorrect, please contact Permit Services at 909-396-3385 for corrections.

Users may add/update the missing information or additional data in the required fields designated with a red asterisk.

13. What if I Have Multiple Locations?

For multiple locations, each facility should have separate facility ID and PIN code. If separate notifications are sent to each facility, separate report for each ID are expected. An active user can access to multiple facilities using valid facility ID# and PIN code.

Note: Facility ID number begins with an "8" (800000 series) should file a single emission report for each 800000 series ID. The 800000 series "unitized" ID numbers are issued to large facilities such as refineries with equipment at contiguous or adjacent locations. If facility has an 800000 series ID and has received multiple notifications for various sub-portions of your facility, please call the AER Program support at (909)396-3660.

14. What If I Have Multiple Working Staff?

Any working staff can register to use the tool. Multiple active users can access to the same facility and work on different section of the emission report. Be warned that if multiple staff are working on the section, data of the last saved will stay in the AQMD database.

15. I Forgot my Username/Password. What Should I do Next?

User with forgotten password can request a reset of password at log-in screen. Go to the AER Home webpage and click on the text "Click here to reset your password." After clicking the link, enter the valid email address in user profile and click the "Send" button. In a few moments, you will receive an email message containing a link and instructions on how to reset your account password. If you do not receive the automatically-generated email after completing the above steps, please be sure to verify that you have provided the correct email address and check your email client's "spam" or "junk mail" folder. Please see "Getting Start" session in Help and Support manual for detailed instructions. If you continue to have issues with the password reset process, send a request for support to: aer@aqmd.gov.

16. How Do I Start Entering Emission Data?

After successfully accessed facility using Facility ID#/PIN code combination, user can first select a reporting year from the list on the lower left side of the "Access Facility" page by clicking on "Open" button for the desired reporting year. This will lead you to the "Facility Home" page, where you can begin entering your facility's emissions data by following the on-screen instructions.

Please complete each reporting element in sequential order (e.g., Step 1, Step 2, Step 3, etc.) in order to avoid data input errors. More detailed instructions may be found in the "Accessing Facility and Completing the Report" section of the AER Help and Support.

17. Not All of Our Devices/Equipment Are Listed in the "Emission Source Classification" page.

For your convenience, the AER Reporting Tool uploads facility's permitted equipment (i.e., only equipment with an "Active" Permit to Operate). Any permitted equipment not listed in the "Emission Source Classification" page should be added by the user by clicking the "Add New Emission Source" link and completing all of the required information fields. Users should also note that all unpermitted equipment generating air pollutants should be added to the Emission Source List. More detailed instructions may be found in the "Accessing Facility and Completing the Report" section of the AER Help and Support.

18. What is An Emission Source (ES)?

Emission source (ES) and its numbers are generated by the reporting tool for tracking purposes. It is designated to a source of emission, whether permitted or not. Each ES is assigned to a device/equipment in facility's permit profile. User can always add ES to the list for the missing source of emissions, permitted or not.

19. How Do I Add an Emission Source (ES)?

User can add an emission source for the operation that either does not require a written permit (Rule 219 equipment or un-permitted operations) or missing from the uploaded permit profile. Please see “Add an Emission Source” section in Help and Support manual for detailed instructions.

20. How Do I Print the Data That I Have Just Entered?

There are three options for printing from the AER Reporting Tool:

Option 1: To print your current view (i.e., the current webpage that is visible on your computer screen), click the print icon (picture of a printer) located at the upper right toolbar within the AER Reporting Tool. Note: This option prints only what is viewable on the user’s current computer screen.

Option 2: Within the AER Reporting Tool, “Print Preview” option, located at the upper right hand corner of the webpage, is available for select lists (e.g., Emission Source Classification list, Process/Emissions Overview lists, etc.)

Option 3: “Print Facility Report”, located on the navigation bar on the left side of the AER Reporting Tool, allows user to select which reports (e.g., AER Report containing all reports, or individual worksheets/summaries) to print and then click the “Print Selected Pages” button at the bottom of the page.

21. Can I Export My AER Data to A Spreadsheet Format (EXCEL)?

Yes. Users may download their AER reporting data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet by clicking the “Excel Reports” button on the navigation bar located at the left side of the reporting tool. Click the “Download Report” button, then you will be prompted to “Open” or “Save” the Excel file. Select “Open” to view the Excel spreadsheet.

22. Can I Exit the AER Reporting Tool If I Have Not Completed My Report?

Yes. The AER Reporting Tool will save partially completed reports; however, it is important to note that you must click the “Save” button on individual pages (wherever applicable) in order to retain the information entered on that specific page. It is recommended that users navigate to various pages within the reporting tool using the navigation bar located on the left side of the tool and avoid using the internet browser’s “Back” or “Forward” buttons.

23. How Do I Report Emissions from Multiple Devices that Vent to a Common Stack?

Identify all the emission sources from the permit profile and note the representative AER device ID where the total stack emissions will be reported. Report all emissions under the selected AER device ID, classified as normally operated. Classify operating status as “Duplicate” for all other emission sources. Fill in the status year and provide a comment on each duplicate device to the effect that they are vented to a common stack.

24. How Do I Report Emissions from Multiple Identical Devices?

Please see “Guidelines for Reporting Emissions from Multiple Identical Devices”.

25. What If the Control Device is Not an Emission Source?

Select “Operating Status” as “Not Generating Emissions” for the control device, fill in the status year, and make a comment that the particular control device (adsorber, absorber, scrubber, bag house/filter) is not contributing air pollutants, in and of itself.

26. How Do I Report Emissions from Spill or Process Upset?

Pollutants airborne as a result of a spill or process upset must be included in the annual emissions report. User must declare early at Facility Information section for the tool to offer a worksheet where user can report (add) the incidents (whether permitted or not). Please see “Reporting Emissions from Non-Routine Operations” section in Help and Support manual for detailed instructions.

27. Can I Receive Credits for Recycled Organic Liquid Waste?

No. Emission credits for liquid hazardous waste shipped out for recycling or disposal are no longer part of emission estimation in the new reporting tool.

28. Do I Report Emissions from Fuels burned in a Vehicle?

No. Do not report fuel throughput or usage amounts and associated emissions from facility "fleet" vehicles such as on-road motor vehicles (cars, trucks, and vans) or off-road vehicles and mobile equipment (forklifts, bulldozers, and tractors).

29. How Long Do I Keep My Emissions Reporting Data?

South Coast AQMD recommends that facilities keep a copy of reported data for at least five years, as well as the supporting documents and calculations used in preparing this report in the event of an emission audit.

30. Am I a RECLAIM Facility?

Only certain facilities are included in the RECLAIM program based on their NO_x and/or SO_x emissions. Participation in RECLAIM is identified and designated from the permitting database. If confusion still exists, please contact AER Support at (909) 396-3660 for clarification.

31. How do I Report RECLAIM Emissions?

The AER Reporting Tool assesses emissions at the equipment/device level. The reporting tool will identify, calculate and summarize emissions subject to RECLAIM requirements accordingly.

32. How do I Report Emissions if My Facility is Subject to RECLAIM Requirements at a Time Other Than the First Day of the Reporting Year?

RECLAIM facilities are identified by two compliance cycles: Cycle 1 Compliance period starts on January 1st and ends on December 31st; Cycle 2 Compliance period starts on July 1st and ends on June 30th. Cycle 1 facilities will report annual RECLAIM NO_x and/or SO_x emissions for the compliance period that coincides with the calendar year reporting period in the AER Program. Cycle 2 facilities have to report emissions in two separate processes for each device: one is for RECLAIM and one is not. By un-checked the RECLAIM box, user is telling the tool to classify emissions from that process is not subject to RECLAIM.

33. Do I Report Emissions from Portable Equipment Registered Under the Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP)?

No. Once the PERP registration is issued, registered equipment is subject to the reporting requirements of the Statewide PERP program.

34. How are Emissions from Charbroilers and Deep Fat Frying Operations Reported?

Emissions (PM and VOC) from charbroilers and deep fat fryers operated by restaurants and eatery establishments directly servicing consumers (e.g. fast foods, cafeteria, etc.) not

reportable in the AER program. However, for commercial and large operations of packaged foods and those have permits from South Coast AQMD, emissions both from food processing and fuel combustion should be reported (contact the Help and Support at (909)396-3660 for emission factors if needed).

35. What is the Overall Control Efficiency?

The Overall Control Efficiency represents the emission portion that is captured and destroyed by control equipment. To calculate the Overall Control Efficiency, use the following formula:

$$\text{Overall Control Efficiency} = \text{Capture Efficiency} \times \text{Destruction Efficiency}$$

Use a decimal fraction to report efficiencies. If the Control Efficiency is in percent, convert percent to a decimal fraction (e.g. 0.85 for 85%, 0.925 for 92.5%).

36. Do I Need to Report Total Particulate Matter (PM) or PM₁₀?

PARTICULATE MATTER (PM) means any material, except uncombined water, which exists in a finely divided form as a liquid or solid at standard conditions. Facility is required to report total PM, which includes, and not limited to, the following subsets: filterable PM, condensable PM, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. If you only have PM₁₀ values available and PM₁₀ is not equal to total PM, multiply PM₁₀ by an appropriate factor to convert it to total PM (contact Support Line at (909)396-3660 for assistance).

37. What Do Rich-Burn or Lean-Burn for Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) Mean?

Below are the definitions of each engine type:

A **Rich-Burn Engine** is a spark-ignited, Otto-cycle or four -stroke engine that is operated with gaseous fuel as defined in [Rule 1110.2](#) and with an exhaust stream oxygen concentration of less than or equal to 4 percent by volume and where the manufacturer's recommended operating air/fuel ratio divided by the stoichiometric air/fuel ratio at full load conditions is less than or equal to 1.1.

A **Rich-Burn Engine with a Three-Way Catalyst** is an engine designed to operate near stoichiometric conditions with a catalytic control device that simultaneously reduces emissions of NO_x, CO and VOC.

A **Lean-Burn Engine** is a spark-ignited, Otto-cycle or two-stroke engine that is operated with gaseous fuel as defined in [Rule 1110.2](#) and with high levels of excess air and an exhaust stream oxygen concentration of greater than 4 Percent by volume and designed to use a lean mixture of fuel and air in order to reduce fuel consumption and exhaust emissions.

If engine specifications are not available, assume engines are 4-stroke and lean-burn type.

38. What Does Horsepower (HP) Mean?

The Horsepower (HP) is the engine rating specified by the engine manufacturer and listed on the engine nameplate and/or equipment specification manual and/or it may be listed on the equipment permit description.

39. What is the Difference between a Two-Stroke or Cycle Internal Combustion (IC) Engine and a Four-Stroke or Cycle IC Engine?

A four-stroke (cycle) IC engine completes its one operation or power cycle by utilizing four distinct piston strokes (intake, compression, power, and exhaust) and in two

crankshaft revolutions; i.e., the piston makes two complete passes in the cylinder to complete one operating cycle. .

A two-stroke or cycle IC engine completes its one operating a power cycle by utilizing two piston strokes (i. e., up and down movements) and in only one crankshaft revolution. This information can be found on the facility's South Coast AQMD permit description and/or equipment specification manual.

40. What is BTU/HR (British Thermal Unit per Hour)?

BTU/HR is the rating of the burner (e.g., for a boiler) specified by the equipment manufacturer, and normally listed on the nameplate and/or equipment specification manual. It specifies the amount of heat released by burning fuels in combustion equipment.

41. What are the Worker and Residential Receptor Distances?

In general, Receptor locations are off-site locations where persons may be exposed to toxic emissions from equipment. There are the following two types of receptor locations: (1) Residential; and, (2) Worker. Residential receptor locations include current residential land uses and areas that may be developed for residential uses in the future, given land use trends in the general area. Worker receptor locations include areas zoned for manufacturing, light or heavy industry, retail activity, or other locations that are regular work sites.

Residential Receptor Distance - Closest distance between any source of air toxic emissions at your facility and the property boundary of any one of the following receptors: house, apartment, convalescent home, trailer park, or other residence.

Worker Receptor Distance - Closest distance between any source of air toxic emissions at your facility and the property boundary of any one of the following receptors: other business or work-site, school, day-care center, shopping center, or hospital.

42. What is SCR and SNCR?

Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) and Selective Non-Catalytic Reduction (SNCR) are control systems for stationary source combustion equipment to reduce Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x) emissions. SCR and SNCR systems use ammonia (NH₃) or Urea (NH₃ derivative) as reducing agents. With both reducing agents, some excess NH₃ remains after the NO_x reduction, and it is emitted with the flue gas. This NH₃ emission is termed "NH₃ slip."

43. What Are Architectural Coatings?

Architectural coatings are materials applied to stationary structures and their appurtenances, to mobile homes, to pavements, or to curbs (see [Rule 1113](#)). For example, pipes connected to stationary structures that deliver products are considered an architectural appurtenance, and protective coatings used on them are architectural coatings. Coatings used in manufacturing or production of goods such as window shutters (wood surface), doors (wood or metal surface), mobile homes or parts (metal, wood, ceramic, etc) are not considered architectural coating under the AER program and must be reported.

44. What are the Annual Emission Thresholds in the Toxic Air Contaminant Table?

There are no reporting thresholds for toxics. All toxic air contaminants must be reported regardless of emission levels. However, emission fees are calculated based on the emission levels specified in Table IV.

45. *What is NAICS?*

North American Industry Classification System replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). NAICS reflects the structure of today's economy in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

46. *How Emissions from Service Stations (Rule 461) are estimated and reported?*

VOC emissions from gasoline and diesel transfer and dispensing (Rule 461) may be estimated and reported using emission factor established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The CARB emission factor includes losses from Loading, Storing, Dispensing, and Spills or Leaks from all components of a transfer and dispensing facility (service station).

For Gasoline:

Underground Gasoline Tanks:

VOC EF = 1.005 lb/1000 gals. (controlled)

Toxics Emissions:

- Benzene: 0.01005 lb/1000 gals (1.0% by weight)
- Naphthalene: 0.001407 lb/1000 gals (0.14% by weight)

Above-ground Tanks:

VOC EF = 0.921 lb/1000 gals. (controlled)

Toxics Emissions:

- Benzene: 0.00921 lb/1000 gals (1.0% by weight)
- Naphthalene: 0.00129 lb/1000 gals (0.14% by weight)

For Diesel:

VOC EF = 0.028 lb/1000 gals.

47. *What If I wish to Use VOC Contents Different from the Default Values?*

The best available data should always be used to report the VOC content whether it is higher or lower than the default value. SCAQMD recognizes and encourages the use of specific VOC data from the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and/or Technical Data Sheets (TDS) provided by manufacturers/suppliers. Commercial grade generic organic chemicals used as solvents and thinners have their densities as the emission factors (VOC content) and the default VOC values are adequate in these instances.

48. *What If I Wish to Use Rule-Based Emission Factors Rather than the Default values?*

Facility should use emission factors that most accurately reflect emissions from its operations whether it is higher or lower than the default values. User may use rule-based factors, permit limit factors, or BACT factors as long as the equipment complies with the corresponding rule, permit, or BACT level.

49. *Can I Pay Emission Fee On-line?*

Yes. Here are steps to follow:

1. Send an image of Fee Summary (part of the printing options) to SCAQMD Billing Services at billingservices@aqmd.gov and inquire about an invoice for emission fees,
2. Billing services will generate an invoice and return information to inquirer,
3. Upon received Invoice Number, user can pay fees on-line at:
https://xappprod.aqmd.gov/CC_OnlinePayment/onlineinvoicepayment/invoicepayment_collect_fac_info
4. A confirmation of fees being paid will be generated. Be sure to include Fee Payment Confirmation with Submittal Package in lieu of a check.